

**Senior Advisory Committee
Wednesday, March 23, 2011
Town Hall, Old Town Road
10:30 a.m.**

Present: Chair Gail Pierce, Marguerite Donnelly, Janet Merritt, Linda Spak, Dorothy Graham, Betsy Theve and Mimi Leveille. Sandra Kelly and Betsey DeMaggio were absent. Deputy Town Clerk Millie McGinnes was present for the recording of minutes.

Gail Pierce called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Approve Minutes of January 19, 2011 Meeting

Ms. Theve moved to approve the minutes of January 19, 2011. Ms. Spak seconded the motion and it carried.

7 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Donnelly, Graham, Merritt, Theve, Leveille) 0 Nays
2 Absent (Kelly, DeMaggio)

Dialogue with Town Manager Nancy Dodge

This item was postponed.

Launch Block Island Community Bulletin Board

Ms. Merritt explained that she and Ms. Donnelly met with the Block Island Times to explore the community website they are launching April 1st called Village Soup. The Block Island Times offered to include a bulletin board to meet the Committees needs in their site, allowing free postings. Ms. Merritt suggested holding off on the Community Bulletin Board launch and participate with the Village Soup. She explained that she did not want to compete with the Times and did not think there are enough people to keep both programs active. She noted that the drawback was that participants will have to go to the Village Soup site to see notices and would not receive email notifications as with the Community Bulletin Board. Discussion ensued regarding when costs would be associated with the Village Soup site. It was suggested that Fraser Lang of the Times be invited to the next meeting.

Ms. Leveille made a motion to put the Community Bulletin Board on hold for two months, participate with Village Soup and revisit at the June meeting to determine whether it meets the needs of the Committee. Ms. Theve seconded the motion and it carried.

6 Ayes (Spak, Donnelly, Graham, Merritt, Theve, Leveille) 1 Nays (Pierce)
2 Absent (Kelly, DeMaggio)

Ms. Pierce stated that she was disappointed that the Community Bulletin Board was being put on hold.

Ms. Merritt and Ms. Kelly were thanked for their hard work on the creation of the bulletin board.

Money Disbursement

Ms. Pierce explained that there was a fitness weekend scheduled for this weekend and the instructor from the South County YMCA has offered to hold a seniors fitness class on Saturday. Ms. Pierce suggested that the class be sponsored by the Committee and she reviewed the details.

Ms. Spak made a motion to sponsor a onetime, free to participants, fitness class “Sit and Be Fit” to be held on Saturday, March 26, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. to be taught by Jaime Aceto of the South County YMCA for the cost of \$30.00. The motion was seconded by Ms. Theve and carried.

7 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Donnelly, Graham, Merritt, Theve, Leveille) 0 Nays
2 Absent (Kelly, DeMaggio)

Ms. Spak stated that she had booked another AARP driving class for June 1, 2011. After reviewing the details, Ms. Spak made a motion to cover the expenses of the driving course (ferry tickets for instructors and lunch ingredients) approximating \$100. Ms. Pierce seconded the motion and it carried.

7 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Donnelly, Graham, Merritt, Theve, Leveille) 0 Nays
2 Absent (Kelly, DeMaggio)

Ms. Leveille explained that BIED was raising funds to replace the carpet in the Old Harbor Meadows Community Center. She noted that they had raised \$3,250 at this time. Ms. Merritt stated that it was important to support BIED, as the community center supports the seniors.

Ms. Leveille made a motion to donate \$300.00 to BIED for the replacement of the carpet at the Old Harbor Meadows Community Center. The motion was seconded by Ms. Theve and carried.

7 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Donnelly, Graham, Merritt, Theve, Leveille) 0 Nays
2 Absent (Kelly, DeMaggio)

Update on Activities:

Swimming Pool

Ms. Spak stated that she was concerned about the lack of response from Neptune Manager Meredith McAloon regarding the pool stairs. Discussions of stronger tactics were addressed. She suggested that she ask Rob Closter to try again to arrange a meeting. It was also suggested that Meredith McAloon be invited to the next meeting if necessary.

FISH

Discussion ensued regarding the duties and responsibilities of FISH: daily care vs. intermittent help. Ms. Graham noted the strong need for a senior advocate or coordinator.

Intergenerational Activities

Ms. Pierce suggested organizing a joint trip with seniors and children, such as a visit to Save the Bay in Newport.

Ms. Spak stated that School Superintendent Bob Hicks has arranged some school children to help seniors with technology instruction at the school.

Ms. Spak reported that the school would be happy to host the Soup Group or Lunch Bunch in the school cafeteria, asking that participants pay for their lunches. This can be arranged through the Glen Pence in the school kitchen.

As previously noted, the AARP driving course is set for June 1, 2011 from 10:00 – 3:15 with lunch included. The cost of the course is \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for nonmembers, with a maximum of 25 participants. Ms. Spak and Ms. Leveille will handle signup.

Ms. Spak was thanked for her diligent work.

New Procedures for Applicants of Committees

It was noted that Betsey DeMaggio is the new member of the Committee, although she is currently on vacation.

Clerk McGinnes reported that the Town Council's policy regarding filling vacancies on commissions is to make an announcement in the paper requesting interested parties to apply. A notification of current and upcoming vacancies is also posted. Appointments are made by the Council at least 30 days from the announcement.

The Committee concurred that letters should be sent to applicants that are not appointed.

Report of Conversations with BI Health Services

Ms. Pierce explained that she has been discussing the need for a social worker with Director Monty Stover at the medical center and he has been pursuing a relationship with a South County organization to send someone over once or twice per week. Ms. Pierce stated that she did not think that arrangement would meet the needs. She would prefer a local coordinator who lives on the island. Discussion ensued. Ms. Merritt stated that she will revise the Senior Coordinator job description for submission to the Town Council in regards to the budget hearings. Ms. Pierce will write a cover letter to accompany the proposal. It was noted that it is important to request funding for a senior coordinator year after year, as the need will only grow.

Feedback from Flower Show Trip

Ms. Spak reported that the flower show trip was a great success. She noted that Recreation Director Closter was very helpful and accommodating. He has offered to do other trips, such as lunch and a movie or haircut and shopping, etc. Ms. Spak noted that the Recreation van is available on the mainland from October through May.

Spring Activities

Ms. Pierce noted that Cindy Kelly was offering a Golden Nia class, a gentler version of her dance/movement class.

New Business:

There was no new business discussed.

Ms. Donnelly left the meeting at 11:56 a.m. and Ms. Leveille left the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

Public Input

There was no public input.

Next Meeting – April 20, 2011 at 10:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2011 at 10:30 a.m.

At 12:00 p.m. Ms. Merritt left the meeting adjourning the quorum.

Millie McGinnes
Deputy Town Clerk
Approved: April 20, 2011